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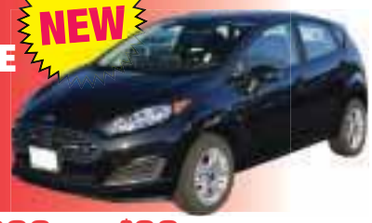

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BUSTING INTO THE BUD BIZ

HANDOUT

A group of local entrepreneurs invented a better weed grinder — and it's turning heads metroNEWS

New bus lanes bad for business

MAIN STREET

Owners left out of consultations, report finds

Evan Matthews
For Metro | Winnipeg

The City of Winnipeg failed to consult with Main Street business owners about installing diamond bus lanes despite promising to do so in 2009, records show.

Minutes from a 2009 executive policy committee meeting show the city promised to consult with businesses that would be affected by installation of northbound diamond lanes on Main Street, between Sutherland and Selkirk avenues.

"During implementation, consultation about the impact on parking will take place with affected Main Street businesses," the minutes read.

However, that consultation never happened.

"Not once," said Matt de la Lande, owner of M. C. De Landes Monuments and Memorials. "One day the signs went up, the diamonds were painted on, and I was left wondering, 'What happened?'"

Multiple businesses in the area say they're losing upward of 50 per cent of profits because of the decision.

The diamond lanes take effect between 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m., so no one can park in the designated lane. De la Lande said businesses are losing out on "go-home" traffic.

Surplus Direct owner Rob McDonald said a large portion of his customer base was people heading down Main Street during the time period parking is now prohibited.

"A lot of people used to stop in on their way home and see what the sales were," said McDonald. Now, he said, his business is a "ghost town" during that time because people don't like to park on side streets in the area.

Area Coun. Ross Eadie agrees with business owners that customers don't feel safe parking on side streets, and as a result, bypass the businesses all together.

However, Eadie said, the city isn't obligated to include businesses in any type of city planning or changes to infrastructure, and referred to doing so as a courtesy. "It sounds like the recommendation was ignored and it should have been listened to," said Eadie. "I'm very disturbed about this situation."

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Tears, love and family greet newly arrived Syrian refugees in Montreal. **Canada**

Tickets were illegal: City

PARKING

Know Your Zone violated the Highway Traffic Act

Stephanie Taylor
Metro | Winnipeg

The city admits it wrongly issued upward of 25,000 parking-ban tickets on Winnipeg's residential streets.

But those who paid up shouldn't expect any cheques in the mail.

City COO Michael Jack said the error came to light following a recent court dispute over a parking ticket that was issued last winter.

That dispute came thanks to Todd Dube of Wise Up Winnipeg, a group that campaigns against the city's use of photo-radar cameras and "unfair" ticketing practices. He challenged in court the validity of the ticket he received last winter, and the city sought a stay of proceedings in the matter, letting him walk away from the ticket.

Dube said at the time the city did not want to admit the program had been ticketing drivers illegally since 2011.

Jack said officials learned in mid-October that the city's snow-clearing program — dubbed Know Your Zone — was in direct violation of Manitoba's Highway Traffic Act.

The program splits the city into different zones, then alerts the public as to which areas would be ploughed between a 12-hour window from either 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. or vice-versa.

However, a sub-section of the traffic act states that without proper signage, parking tickets can only be issued between 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

As a result, he said, the city is "refining" its operations and instructing the parking authority to stop pursuing collection of any outstanding tickets and for the provincial Crown to stay any matters before the courts.

But drivers who already paid their fines are out of luck, as Jack explained there are bylaws in place that effectively render those files closed.

Todd Dube of Wise Up Winnipeg challenged his snow-route parking-ban ticket earlier this year. METRO FILE

> **We're hopeful, we're confident that Winnipeggers actually want their streets cleaned.**
> Michael Jack

"We can only pay out what we're authorized to be paying out," he said.

Jack estimates that in the past three years, more than 32,000 residential parking ban tickets were issued, with 25,000 of those handed out beyond the time frame of 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Switching from around-the-clock ticketing to only a seven-hour window will mean several hundred thousand dollars in lost revenue for the city, he added.

Due to the timing of the discovery, Jack said, nothing could be done in time for this winter except comply with the act.

But he said city officials would work with the province to have the restriction lifted for future years.

In the meantime, Jack said, the city's plowing program would roll out as usual, including courtesy towing and ticketing only happening between 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Even with the changes, he still expects residents to co-operate.

"We're hopeful, we're confident that Winnipeggers actually want their streets cleaned."

SPEEDING

Cameras are not effective: Report

The Frontier Centre for Public Policy released a report this month that says red-light cameras do not make roads safer.

Speed or Greed: Does Automated Traffic Enforcement Improve Safety or Generate Revenue reports there is little evidence that automated traffic enforcement reduces speeding.

Setting a speed limit that is in tune with actual driving practices, increasing the length of yellow lights and posting road signs are a more effective way of reducing speeding, the report says.

"The problem is that the City of Winnipeg does not adhere to standard engineering practices," said Wise Up Winnipeg's Todd Dube, referring to those features.

Frontier's report shows that most speeding infractions occur at intersections with short yellow lights, few road signs and low speed limits.

The report also claims that "speed kills" is an unsubstantiated slogan.

It cites research that indicates that differences in speed are the main problem and, in some cases, higher speed limits lead to increased road safety.

Dube claims that rather than make changes to road conditions, the City of Winnipeg targets deficient intersections with police officers and red-light cameras. "That just won't be tolerated anymore," Dube said.

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HUDSON'S BAY

Suspect has criminal past

HOMICIDE

Tina Fontaine met with killer several times, police allege

Stephanie Taylor
Metro | Winnipeg

The details surrounding Tina Fontaine's death may still be shrouded in uncertainty.

But what's known is this: the 15-year-old who spent most of her life with her great-aunt on Sagkeeng First Nation, located about 70 kilometres northeast of Winnipeg, had come to the city to visit her biological mother and ended up running away.

While on the run, it is believed, she frequented a house in the east end of the city, where she became acquainted with 53-year-old Raymond Joseph Cormier.

That's the man who Winnipeg police now allege killed Fontaine, wrapped her body in a bag and then dumped her in the Red River.

Raymond Joseph Cormier, 53, has been charged with second-degree murder in the death of 15-year-old Tina Fontaine. CONTRIBUTED

Fontaine's body was pulled from the water on Aug. 17, 2014.

"The murder of this child — and let's not forget she was a child — has shocked and outraged our community. I think that outrage has resonated across our nation," deputy police chief Danny Smyth said during a news conference.

> **She had some very, very good family support ... but she wanted more.**
> Sgt. John O'Donovan

He announced Cormier was arrested in Vancouver and would be brought to Winnipeg to face a charge of second-degree murder in Fontaine's death.

Smyth described the difficulty officers faced in piecing together Fontaine's whereabouts.

"It is believed Tina and Cormier were acquainted," he said, adding investigators believe the pair had "several encounters" and that Cormier murdered Tina during their last encounter.

As to the nature of the relationship, Sgt. John O'Donovan would only say "there was definitely some exploitation going on, and not just by our accused here, but by several other people."

"She had some very, very good family support from her great-aunt but she wanted more and couldn't find that. She was just an extremely lonely person, I think."

He said police began investigating Cormier as a suspect around September 2014.

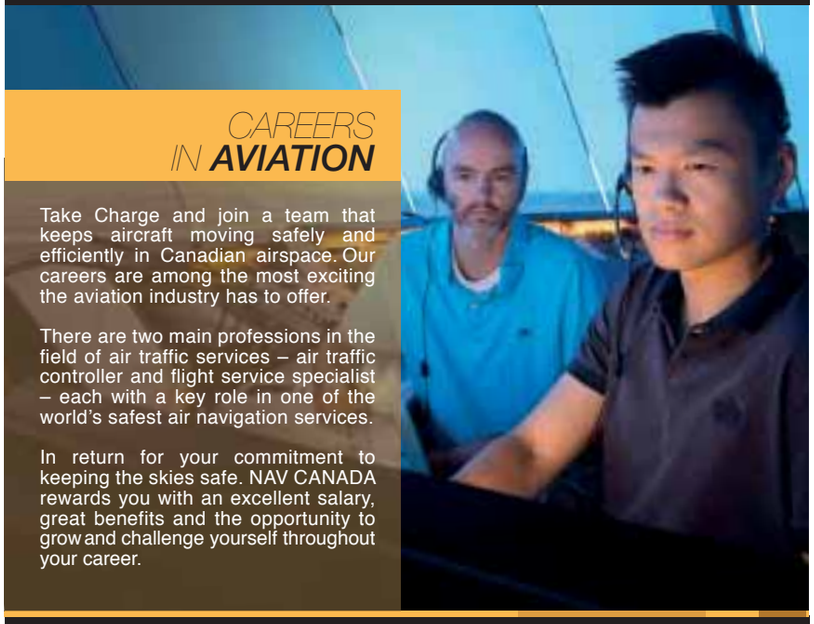
Police said Cormier, originally from New Brunswick, had been living in Winnipeg for several years at the time of Fontaine's death.

Cormier has a long rap sheet, police said, with numerous convictions from across Canada, ranging from "simple breaches to serious violent offences."

TIMELINE

July 31, 2014: Fontaine is reported missing. She was in the care of Manitoba Child and Family Services.
Aug. 8, 2014: Police find Fontaine in a vehicle they pulled over but do not take her into custody.
Aug. 9, 2014: Fontaine is reported missing for a second time. Her great-aunt will later say social workers told her that a few hours after police came across Tina, she was found passed out in an alley and taken to hospital. She says social workers picked Fontaine up but the girl ran away again.
Aug. 17, 2014: Fontaine's body, wrapped in a bag, is pulled from the Red River.
Sept. 30, 2014: Assembly of First Nations calls for an independent probe of how police handled Fontaine's disappearance.
March 24, 2015: One of the two police officers who had contact with Fontaine is suspended without pay. No charges are laid.
Dec. 11, 2015: Police announce Raymond Joseph Cormier, 53, has been charged.

NAV CANADA



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RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

Woman seeks to repay a stranger turned saviour

A Winnipeg woman hopes to find and repay a Good Samaritan who helped her and her dog out of a bad situation.

Chantell Smyth said she recently ran into a convenience store to grab a cup of coffee and left her car engine running, but when she came outside, she realized all the doors were locked with her dog, Cola, inside.

She admitted she panicked, partly because she had no cell phone with her, no wallet and only $18 in cash in her pocket.

She also said it's been a really bad year, with her father dying, her mother being injured in a house fire and her husband losing his job.

But she said her desperation was eased when an older woman carrying a cane came by and handed her $70 so she could call a locksmith.

Staff at the convenience store said it was a wonderful gesture to witness.

"The customer was upset and understandably panicking as it was a good 1-1.5 hours of trying to work out how she could get into her locked car," said Barb Beal. "I didn't want her to have to break the car window, but we were running out of options."

Chantell Smyth's dog, Cola, was trapped inside her car before an unknown senior arrived to lend a hand. FACEBOOK

Beal said the older woman heard what was going on and immediately went to the store's ATM and withdrew the money.

"The customer was clearly overwhelmed and was reduced to tears by the generosity of this person," said Beal. "I know she'd had a tough year, so this really was a lovely gesture to end the year."

Smyth said all she knows about the woman who gave her the money is that she has a cane and drives a silver SUV with a Winnipeg Jets licence plate. She'd like to thank her and repay the money.

"Even though I've had some really bad luck, there are people out there with worse luck," she said. "My goal was to pay it forward the same way she did to me and spread the word there are good people out there."

CTV WINNIPEG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

We'll privatize liquor sales if elected: Liberal leader

POLITICS

Bokhari vows to adopt model similar to that in Alberta

Manitoba Liberal Leader Rana Bokhari has promised to privatize the province's liquor stores if she wins next April's provincial election.

Bokhari said she would adopt a model similar to one in Alberta where retail outlets are privately owned, but the government maintains control of wholesale distribution and markup.

"This is a win for taxpayers. This is a win for consumers, for restaurant owners, and a win for private retailers," Bokhari said.

"It will allow for more selection and better pricing."

Bokhari admitted the move could lead to lower wages for liquor-store employees, who are currently paid above minimal retail wages and are members of the Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union.

She offered the workers an olive branch — loan guarantees if they wanted to buy a store and a job somewhere within the liquor system if they wanted to remain.

The NDP government and the Opposition Progressive Conservatives have both promised to keep government stores. Most liquor outlets in the province are government-run, although there are exceptions such as hotel beer vendors, rural liquor stores and a small number of private wine boutiques.

Some details of the Liberal plan have yet to be worked out. Bokhari was unable to say whether she would cap the number of private liquor stores or allow the market to decide.

The government employees union has opposed privatization on a number of grounds, including an assertion that liquor stores would proliferate and booze would more easily find its way to minors.

Bokhari said she consulted with stakeholders in developing a policy. She said the government employees union had concerns.

"There's a possibility that (the workers) will be earning less money. I don't think that anyone would say that there's a chance that they won't, and let's just call it what it is, they very well may.

"But for the bigger picture — for Manitobans to have a greater selection, better prices — this is the model that we've committed to."

The Liberals have one seat in the legislature, but have risen in opinion polls since the last election.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rana Bokhari says her plan will allow for better pricing and greater selection of products. CONTRIBUTED

> **This is a win for taxpayers. This is a win for consumers, for restaurant owners, and a win for private retailers.**
> Manitoba Liberal Leader Rana Bokhari

THE GOVERNMENT'S VIEW

The NDP government called the Liberal plan a failure on all fronts that could lead to higher prices because of the addition of private operators in the chain of sale.

"Their ideological fixation on privatization would only hurt workers, reduce wages and raise liquor prices," Ron Lemieux, minister responsible for Manitoba's Liquor and Lotteries Corp., said in a written statement.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

PROMISES

Finances will work, Grits say

Manitoba's rookie Liberal leader has refused so far to explain how she plans to pay for tens of millions of dollars in promises she is making in advance of next April's provincial election.

In a year-end interview, Rana Bokhari said her party has crunched the numbers, but feels no need to reveal them now.

"When the time is appropriate — not because you want it but because it's our time as a party, as a team ... we will put it out."

Bokhari, a former lawyer, took over the Liberals in 2013, two years after an election that saw them reduced to one seat in the legislature and 7.5 per cent of the popular vote.

Bokhari has made a series of promises in recent months that have come with price tags but with no indication as to how a Liberal government would pay for them, including:

- A $25 million annual sales tax rebate for municipalities
- $10 million a year to convert student loans to grants.
- Up to $5 million a year for increased in vitro fertilization funding.
- A phased-in elimination of the payroll tax, which brings in $350 million annually.

Bokhari hinted the plan contains some form of spending efficiency within existing programs.

"There's smart spending and there's complete and utter mismanagement, OK? So our approach is trying to spend smarter, proactively, wiser for the future, for long-term goals and long-term positive outcomes rather than walking in, slashing everything and 'OK, well, now we're going to flip this for this and this for this,"' she said. "Does that make sense?" THE CANADIAN PRESS

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INVENTION

The Clipper cuts marijuana rather than mulching it

Evan Matthews
For Metro | Winnipeg

A group of Winnipeg entrepreneurs are busting their way into the marijuana scene by reinventing a 110-year-old design called The Clipper.

Matt Olsen said he, Greg Moneta and Jesse Marr came up with the idea to create a brand new and innovative "herb" grinder.

The idea has taken off — even garnering attention from Marc Emery, the Prince of Pot.

"Marc has endorsed it, and he has one. He's tweeted about it a few times, and we've had conversations about it," said Olsen.

"He loves it, and he wants to carry it in his retail store in Vancouver. So far he's been really helpful, and a big advocate of the design."

Olsen said the idea stems from the input of regular grinder users, and what their complaints were when dealing with traditional grinders.

Olsen said his small group identified 30 brands — many of which were manufacturing their own grinders — but were all producing the same thing with subtle variations.

"We threw out that entire design," said Olsen.

> **The blade is a game changer because it doesn't build up resin.**
> Keely Middleton

"We decided to go with an entirely different method we felt solved a lot of problems associated with the old version."

The biggest difference is a rotating stainless steel blade and a patented wedge design that cuts herbs rather than mulching it, and drastically reduces user effort.

The product's users, like Keely Middleton, say they are noticing a difference.

"The biggest difference between the clipper and a standard grinder is the cutting blades versus the regular teeth," said Middleton.

"The blade is a game changer because it doesn't build up resin in the teeth and hinder the ability to turn and grind."

The group has launched an Indiegogo crowdfunding campaign and are currently in the last two-week push to reach $25,000. So far they've raised $16,000.

"We're looking for people who are interested in being the first adopters," said Olsen.

"It's significantly discounted from what it will retail at… This gives people an opportunity... to be the first ones to receive it."

The group has partnered with Lift Innovations, and been approached by distributors who want to carry the product.

Olsen and Marr plan to establish The Clipper in an e-commerce store, and are building a worldwide distribution plan.

"My favourite part just has to be the overall look of it," said Middleton.

ABOVE: Jesse Marr, Greg Moneta and Matt Olsen say their blade design (RIGHT) reduces build-up. HANDOUT

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CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

Aboriginal workers hounded for taxes

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has been aggressively collecting back taxes from a group of mostly low-income aboriginal women who lost a long-running legal battle to be exempt from paying personal income taxes because their employer was situated on a reserve.

Native Leasing Services, an employee outsourcing company that has its headquarters on Six Nations of the Grand River, a reserve near Brantford, Ont., is seeking a remission order from National Revenue Minister Diane Lebouthillier — who would have to recommend it to cabinet for approval — on behalf of 3,916 former employees.

"Most of the applicants live on or near the poverty line.... A large portion of these employees will never be able to pay the tax assessments that have been made against them," Jim Fyshe, a lawyer working probono for Native Leasing Services, wrote in the application for a remission order filed in June 2013.

The employees, whose annual income at Native Leasing Services averaged about $27,000, according to Fyshe, are being pursued by collections officers who are putting liens on their homes, garnishing their wages and clawing back benefits for years of personal income taxes after the courts supported a decision by Canada Revenue Agency to reinterpret the Indian Act.

One of them is Ramona Dunn, 53, who the CRA says owes nearly $94,000 in taxes, fines and interest for the five years she worked as a registered nurse and diabetes educator at Anishnawbe Health Toronto, where she was technically an employee of Native Leasing Services.

Dunn said she took the job at the non-profit agency for a smaller salary than she would have earned at a hospital for the chance to help her people.

She said the tax exemption, which she still believes she has a right to as a status Indian, helped make up some of the difference in take-home pay.

CRA spokesman Philippe Brideau said remission orders are considered on a case-by-case basis. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The CRA says Ramona Dunn, seen in front of her home in Exeter, Ont., owes $94,000 in back taxes. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Newly arrived Syrian refugee Samer Beylouneh wipes a tear as his daughter Laila greets her aunt Marie Belona at a welcome centre in Montreal on Saturday. PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

'Their arrival is a Christmas present'

SYRIAN REFUGEES

Anas Fransis reunited with his relatives after 8 years

The arrival of a second federal-government planeload of Syrian refugees in Montreal Saturday night was "a real Christmas present" for one Syrian man who was reunited with family he hasn't seen in eight years.

Anas Fransis and his mother were at the welcome centre near the airport to welcome Fransis' uncle and his wife, their two teenage daughters and Fransis' grandmother, who were among the 161 privately sponsored refugees to make the trip from Beirut to Canada aboard a government aircraft.

Fransis ran out to greet them, twirling his cousins and embracing the adults. His grandmother, Laila Saeed, was the last one through the door, her face wet with tears.

"They'll be here for Christmas; they'll be here for New Year's," said Fransis, who came to Canada from Syria in 2008. "Their arrival is a Christmas present ... a real Christmas present."

His 13-year-old cousin Laila Beylouneh was excited for her family's new start. "My future is starting now," she said.

The arrival comes less than 48 hours after a government aircraft brought 163 refugees to Toronto on Thursday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

B.C.-BOUND

Relatives of drowned boy to arrive by year's end

The aunt of a Syrian toddler whose lifeless body pictured on a Mediterranean beach sparked global outrage over a refugee crisis says the flights have been booked to bring her relatives to Canada.

Tima Kurdi says her brother Mohammad Kurdi, along with his wife and five children, are scheduled to arrive in British Columbia on Dec. 28.

Mohammad is the uncle of Alan Kurdi, the three-year-old boy who died with his mother and older brother when their overcrowded boat flipped while crossing between Turkey and Greece. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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New agreement puts the planet on a 'carbon diet'

ENVIRONMENT

Close to 200 nations sign on to ambitious Paris eco-pact

The world is about to go on a carbon diet and it won't be easy — or cheap.

Nearly 200 nations worldwide approved a first-of-its-kind universal agreement Saturday to wean Earth off fossil fuels and slow global warming.

On Sunday morning, as with many first day dieters, the reality set in. The numbers — like calorie limits and gym time — are daunting.

How daunting? Try more than 7.04 billion tons. That's how much carbon dioxide needs to stay in the ground instead of being spewed into the atmosphere for those reductions to happen — if you take the easier of two goals mentioned in Saturday's deal. To get to the harder goal, the number is even larger.

In the pact, the countries pledged to limit global warming to about another degree Celsius — and if they can, only half that much.

A vaguer goal is that by sometime in the second half of the century, man-made greenhouse gas emissions — including methane and other heat-trapping gases as well as carbon dioxide — won't exceed the amount nature absorbs. Earth's complex and ever-changing carbon cycle would have to get back to balance.

In practice, the world will have to emit almost zero greenhouse gases by 2070 to reach the easier goal, or by 2050 to reach the harder one, said John Schellnhuber, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany.

The harder goal — limit warming by another half a degree Celsius — is probably already impossible, said Joeri Rogelj at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Austria. Most likely the best the world can hope for is overshooting by a few tenths of a degree and then slowly bring the temperature back down to the target.

That may involve something called negative emissions, a system in which the world (technology and nature combined) take out more carbon dioxide from the air than humanity puts in. Nearly 90 per cent of scenarios for how to establish a safer temperature in the world involve going backward, but are also so far not very realistic, said Kevin Anderson, deputy director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research in Britain.

Negative emissions involve more forests, maybe seeding the oceans, and possibly technology that sucks carbon out of the air and stores it underground. More biomass or forests require enormous land areas and direct capture of carbon from air is expensive, but with a sustained research effort costs can probably be brought below $100 per metric ton, said engineering and policy professor Granger Morgan of Carnegie Mellon University.

Leading up to the Paris Agreement, nearly every nation formed an individual action plan to cut or at least slow the growth of carbon pollution over the next decade or so. Richer, developed nations, like the United States, Europe and Japan, pledged to cut now. Developing nations that say they need fossil fuels to pull themselves out poverty pledged to slow the rate of growth now, and cut later.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The slogan "DECARBONIZE" is projected on the Eiffel Tower as part of the COP21 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, France on Dec. 11. FRACOIS MORI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

7.04

Volume of carbon dioxide emissions, in tons, needing to stay in the ground instead of being released to meet the easier of two new goals.

2070

By 2070, the world will have to emit close to zero greenhouse gases to achieve the easier of the two new targets set by Saturday's agreement.

CLIMATE PLAN

'The best chance we have'

President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry hailed the newly passed international climate change agreement as a major achievement that could help turn the tide on global warming, but got a quick reminder that Republicans will fight it all the way.

Obama said the climate agreement made Saturday night by almost 200 nations "can be a turning point for the world" and credited his administration for playing a key role.

He said the climate agreement "offers the best chance we have to save the one planet we have."

The immediate reaction of leading Republican critics was a stark reminder of the conflict that lies ahead.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said Obama is "making promises he can't keep" and should remember that the agreement "is subject to being shredded in 13 months."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

We've shown that the world has both the will and the ability to take on this challenge.
Barack Obama

FIREARMS

Guns easier to obtain, carry since Sandy Hook

The 2012 massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School, in which a mentally troubled young man killed 26 children and teachers, served as a rallying cry for gun-control advocates across the nation.

But many states have moved in the opposite direction, embracing the National Rifle Association's axiom that more "good guys with guns" are needed.

In Kansas, gun owners can now carry concealed weapons without obtaining a license. In Texas, those with permits will soon be able to carry openly in holsters and bring concealed weapons into some college classrooms. And in Arkansas, people may be able to carry guns into polling places in time for the next federal election.

Dozens of new state laws have made obtaining and carrying guns easier, and made it harder for local governments to enact restrictions, according to an Associated Press review of state legislation. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RUSSIA

Fire kills 23 disabled psychiatric patients

A fire swept through a Russian home for people with mental illnesses, killing 23 patients and injuring another 23, many of whom were on medication or otherwise unable to walk, emergency services said Sunday.

The remaining 24 patients were safely evacuated, including some who had to be carried out of the building, and the four medical personnel working at the home were unhurt, they said.

The fire raised additional concern in Russia because it followed two similar fires in 2013 that took the lives of 75 people. After those fires, the government promised to improve fire safety at institutions for psychiatric patients.

Investigators have not yet determined the cause of this weekend's fire, which broke out late Saturday in Alferovka, a village in the Voronezh region about 600 kilometres (350 miles) south of Moscow. The fire in the one-story brick building was extinguished shortly after 3 a.m. (0000 GMT) Sunday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Firefighters work to put out a blaze at a home for people with mental illness in Russia early Sunday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EASTERN GHOUTA

Syrian rebels strike Damascus suburb

Rebels entrenched in an eastern suburb of Damascus fired volleys of mortar shells into the Syrian capital on Sunday, killing three people, including a child, and wounding 33, Syria's state-run news agency and residents said. Government forces hit back with airstrikes that activists said killed at least 28 people.

The Damascus suburb, known as Eastern Ghouta, is held by rebels fighting to topple President Bashar Assad who often launch mortars into Damascus, his seat of power.

Sunday's barrage — more than 40 mortar shells according to one report — was particularly strong and sustained, shaking residents out of bed in the early morning as shells struck residential districts.

SANA said a child was killed and three people were wounded, and said the shells caused material damage to cars and buildings.

The government responded with airstrikes and missiles on suspected rebel outposts in Eastern Ghouta.

The Local Coordination Committees and the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, two opposition outfits that track the war, said at least 28 people were killed in Douma and Saqba, which are part of the same sprawling suburb.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah announced the names of at least 11 militants it said were killed while fighting in Syria.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SHELLING

The shelling came as the United Nations humanitarian chief, Stephen O'Brien, was visiting the Syrian capital to review humanitarian work and assess the impact on civilians of the intensified fighting and military operations.

IN BRIEF

Saudis elect 20 women in monumental vote

Saudi voters elected 20 women for local government seats, a day after women voted and ran in elections for the first time in the country's history.

The 20 female candidates represent just one per cent of the roughly 2,100 municipal council seats up for grabs.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Unrest in Burundi prompts order of evacuation

The Canadian and U.S. governments asked their citizens to leave Burundi as soon as possible Sunday after 87 people were killed Friday in an escalation of the violence surrounding the disputed third term of President Pierre Nkurunziza. The Dec. 11 fighting was deemed the worst in months of turmoil since April. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MYANMAR

POLITICIAN LAUNCHES CLEANUP DRIVE

Leader of National League for Democracy party (NLD) Aung San Suu Kyi, centre, picks garbage during a cleanup drive initiated by Suu Kyi in Kawhmu, Myanmar on Sunday.

Suu Kyi led the garbage collection on early foggy Sunday in Kawhmu township of Yangon region, where she won her seat for the Lower House in the country's general election. GEMUNU AMARASINGHE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Conservatives trump National Front surge

FRANCE

Marine Le Pen fails to take a single region in election

Marine Le Pen's far-right National Front collapsed in French regional elections Sunday, failing to take a single region after dominating the first round of voting, pollsters projected. The conservatives surged against the governing Socialists, changing the political map of France.

The failure of the National Front to gain any of the six regions where it was leading didn't stop the anti-immigration party from looking to the 2017 presidential election — Le Pen's ultimate goal.

Le Pen had been riding high after extremist attacks and an unprecedented wave of migration into Europe, and the party came out on top in the voting in France's 13 newly drawn regions in the first round a week ago. But projections by France's major polling firms suggested the party lost in all of the regions Sunday, including decisive losses for both Le Pen and her popular niece.

"Here we stopped the progression of the National Front," said conservative Xavier Bertrand, who was projected to beat Le Pen in the Nord-Pas de Calais region.

> **Nothing will stop us.**
> Marine Le Pen

Le Pen supporters in a hall in the gritty northern town of Henin-Beaumont booed his image on a big screen as he spoke. The atmosphere was grim, in stark contrast to a week earlier when Le Pen won more than 40 per cent of the vote — and was more than 15 points ahead of Bertrand.

The tables turned on Sunday as Bertrand beat Le Pen by nearly 15 points.

Le Pen struck an upbeat tone despite the rout, pledging to keep fighting to expand support for her party. She said she would in the coming weeks "rally all the French, of all origins, who want to join us."

"Nothing will stop us," she told cheering supporters.

Le Pen won 42.8 per cent compared with Bertrand's 57 per cent, according to the Interior Ministry. Le Pen's niece, Marion Marechal-Le Pen, took 46 per cent in the southern Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur region, compared with 53.7 per cent for conservative Nice Mayor Christian Estrosi.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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ECONOMY

Liberal deficits could hit $25B

Now that the federal Liberals have shied away from their vow to keep annual deficits under $10 billion, they've latched on to another fiscal target — and this one will be much easier to meet.

The new government is suddenly talking about the debt-to-GDP ratio, promising repeatedly to keep it on a downward track every year until the next election.

The government calculates its debt-to-GDP ratio by dividing total federal debt by the overall size of the economy, as measured by nominal GDP.

It represents a government's capacity to pay back debt — and focusing on it gives politicians more spending flexibility.

By targeting debt-to-GDP, the Liberals could instead be prepared to run annual deficits of up to $25 billion in the coming years and still lower the ratio — as long as the economy grows at a decent pace, economists say.

"The government does have a fair bit of room if what they're trying to do is just see the debt-to-GDP ratio go down," said Mike Moffatt, who teaches economics at the University of Western Ontario's Ivey Business School.

0.9%

The government expects nominal GDP for 2015 to only grow by 0.9 per cent largely due to the squeeze of low oil prices, according to its fall fiscal update.

The adoption of the debt-to-GDP ratio as a "fiscal anchor" is not new. It was mentioned in the Liberal election platform as one of the ways to keep spending under control. The campaign rhetoric, however, largely focused on the $10-billion annual deficit.

No longer.

With uncosted election promises piling up on top of unforeseen shortfalls in the underlying fiscal plan, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has emphasized the more-reachable fiscal anchor in recent days.

"We will continue to decrease (the debt-to-GDP ratio) every single year because that's important for the fiscal health of our country," Trudeau said Wednesday, after casting further doubt on the $10-billion annual deficit target because of economic challenges.

"We always targeted modest deficits, we had hoped it would be around $10 billion — we will see if we will be able to hold at that level."

Plain old math dictates the ratio can continue to fall even if the public books slide into the red — at least to a point.

That's because even if the federal debt gets fatter, the ratio will edge downwards if the economy is growing faster than the debt.

Still, in an economy battered by low commodity prices, the debt-to-GDP promise doesn't exactly look like a slam dunk, either. THE CANADIAN PRESS

> **We always targeted modest deficits ... around $10 billion — we will see if we will be able to hold at that level.**
> Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

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metro

As home prices soar out of reach for many, a growing number of Canadians are turning to alternative styles of housing — such as this tiny house in Victoria. CONTRIBUTED/ THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadians turn to pint-size housing

LIVING SPACES

Affordability, saving time some reasons for downsizing

Nine years ago, Thelma Fayle swapped her 4,000 square-foot home in a rural area of Victoria for a house measuring only nine feet wide on the inside after finding it exhausting to take care of her property.

The desire to save time is one of several factors cited by the growing number of Canadians who are turning to alternative styles of housing, ranging from narrow houses to tiny ones to those sandwiched into laneways between other homes.

Other factors include environmental considerations — smaller homes require less power to heat — and affordability concerns, as home prices in certain Canadian cities continue to soar out of reach for many.

In Toronto, developer Adam Ochshorn says his company, Curated Properties, has found a niche in building homes for families who have been priced out of the market for detached houses but don't want to migrate out to the suburbs or live in a glass tower. Ochshorn has several projects in the works that preserve elements of the traditional detached house format — multi-floor living with an outdoor terrace — but in unconventional spaces and at a lower price point.

For some, like Connor Ferster, alternative living is less about affordability and more about wanting to live off the grid. In the winter of 2013 to 2014, Ferster ditched his studio apartment in downtown Calgary for a teepee 45 minutes outside the city. The following summer, he built a 96-square foot home on wheels.

A small house in Victoria
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Of course, the shift to compact living comes with some challenges. Ottawa-based architect and tiny home expert Andy Thomson, who himself is sharing a 500 square-foot space with his wife and their 11-year-old child, says the key to getting by in a constrained space is to have "furniture that's like a swiss army knife" — such as shelving units and beds that fold into the walls.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Marketing the holidays tricky

When something as simple as a red Starbucks cup stirred a controversy stateside over how businesses mark the approach of Christmas, Canadian retailers took notice.

Retailers across the country are well aware that how they market the holidays in an increasingly multicultural society is a sensitive issue. The way in which retailers approach the weeks leading up to the end of the year has evolved over time as businesses respond to customer reactions.

This year's Starbucks controversy, which hogged headlines in the U.S. in November, shone a spotlight on the issue. Executives said they wanted to embrace "simplicity and quietness." But some religious conservatives saw the new cup as a blow against tradition.

About a decade ago, retailers who didn't want to offend any segment of Canada's multicultural society removed the word Christmas from much of their marketing, said Michael LeBlanc, senior vice-president of marketing with the Retail Council of Canada.

Businesses now appear to have permission from most Canadians to use the word Christmas as Dec. 25 approaches without it being taken as an affront to those who don't celebrate the occasion, he said.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

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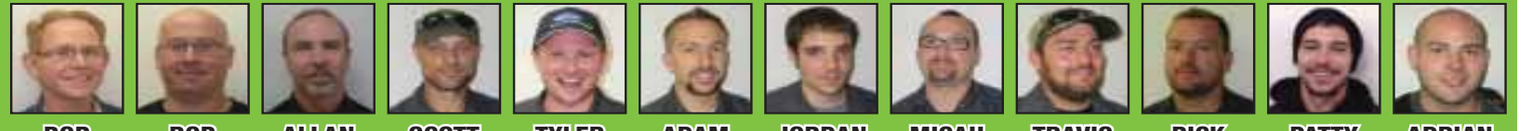

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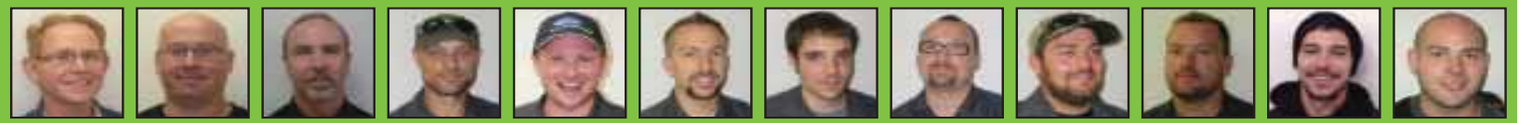

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metro VIEWS
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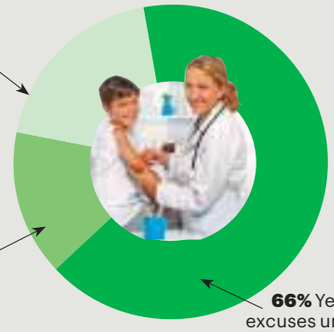
Metro MONDAY POLL

One nation under vaccination

Visit metronews.ca **every Friday to have your say.**

Under a proposed Ontario law, parents will have to attend an education session at the local public-health unit if they want a vaccine exemption for non-medical reasons. Few things have been more explosively controversial — or more maligned — in recent years than vaccinations, though evidence conclusively shows they're safe and effective. In fact, they're so effective that many of us have never personally encountered a vaccine-preventable illness. We asked our readers for forgotten family stories about the fear-filled days before shots prevented some of the most deadly diseases.

1 Should all routine vaccinations be mandatory in Canada?

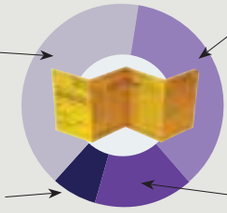


19% No, it should be up to parents

15% No , but there should be a serious consequence for not vaccinating (i.e. a financial penalty, or being banned from school)

66% Yes, no excuses unless there is a valid health exception

2 How do you keep track of vaccinations for yourself or your family?



41% Old-fashioned paper

36% I trust my doctor, school or health unit to keep track

16% I don't. One of us is probably due for a booster

7% Digitally/ with an app

3 What's your experience with vaccine-preventable diseases?

40% I've never had one & don't know anyone who has.
32% I've suffered from a vaccine-preventable disease.
17% A family member or someone I know has had one.
11% Either myself, someone I know or a family member has suffered permanent effects of a vaccine-preventable disease.

We had to cancel a trip because someone at my son's daycare got chickenpox.

My grandfather was partially paralyzed for life due to polio.

I contracted measles as a small child and was left partly deaf.

I had measles, mumps and chickenpox before there were vaccines. They were all miserable.

WE ASKED Metro readers

The police aren't at war. No 'street tank' needed

INSIDE THE PERIMETER

Shannon VanRaes

A veteran police officer once told me the worst thing that ever happened to community policing was air-conditioning.

It keeps people indoors all summer and officers in their cruisers, they said. The result? Less public interaction with police, fewer opportunities to intervene before bad situations developed and reduced intelligence when they did.

If air-conditioning was a setback, I can only imagine what the Winnipeg Police Service's newly purchased $343,000 armoured vehicle will do for community relations.

It represents a move away from serving the public and towards seeing citizens as adversaries.

It's called the Gurkha MVP. And what does it do, besides ensconce officers in bullet-proof steel and glass, protecting them from even a chance encounter with those they are paid to serve?

Well, a quick look at promotional videos from the manufacturer, Terradyne Armored Vehicles Inc. — once you get past all the MMA ads — informs me the Gurkha is really wicked at driving over golden sand dunes and looks particularly fetching at sunset. It can also crush a dozen pumpkins in one go. Seriously dude, a dozen! One online reviewer called it a "street tank."

Make no mistake, it's a military vehicle marketed with glossy combat porn. It represents a militarization of our police force, a move away from serving the public and towards seeing citizens as adversaries and combatants.

Equally as concerning is the WPS's decision not to table the purchase with the Winnipeg Police Board. They only informed the board of the purchase after it was made.

We do know that as a result of this purchase, the board has changed its policy on large operational acquisitions. Now all police purchases exceeding $100,000 will need board approval.

As for why the WPS says it needs such a vehicle — last I checked, I'm pretty sure Canada still has an actual military should we encounter a situation serious enough to require fighting vehicles — it is because something bad will inevitably happen. Like really, really bad. So bad, the WPS can't actually spell it out. Instead it must rely on veiled references to mass shooting and terrorism. Not that anyone explained exactly how a tank would assist in either of those hypothetical situations. Wild shoot outs? Driving through buildings? Or will alleged criminals be so awed by the massive power of the Gurkha that they will simple cower before its mighty girth?

It's a dangerous path of reasoning that generates fear and mistrust, but it's the path the WPS has set us on.

Look for the Gurkha on Winnipeg streets next spring and misguided public-relation campaigns by next winter. Mark my words, that tank will be covered in lights and rolling down Portage by the time the next Santa Claus Parade heads out. Ho, ho, ho … nothing to see here.

Shannon VanRaes is a Winnipeg-based journalist and photojournalist who spends her days contributing to the Manitoba Co-operator and her nights covering urban affairs. She can be reached on Twitter @ShannonVanRaes.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

Stumped? I'm here to help with your hard-to-buy-for list

You're very busy, I know.

You have 15 people to buy presents for, and that's not even counting yourself. Sure, you made a trip to the mall, but it took three days to find your way out again (online shopping has decimated your mall-navigation skills).

Well, I'm here to offer a few tips for those hard-to-buy-for listees.

Let's start in the obvious place: Justin Trudeau. Now that he's a sex symbol in the U.S. (those Vogue photos? Grrrr!), he's likely wondering what this means for his future memoir endeavours. Common Ground was a bit of political positioning ahead of the election. It's far too on-the-nose for a sex-symbol memoir, which should include much more innuendo and tongue-in-cheek asides, if not some actual cheek — and thus I recommend you gift him Burt Reynolds' new memoir But Enough About Me (no, not "Butt"). There's apparently a lot more to Burt than his 1970s nude centrefold, and Trudeau, reduced to his broad chest, strong jaw and wavy hair by the U.S. press, may need, one day, to make a similar argument after posing tastefully nude to raise awareness about climate change.

On to the next: Angela Merkel, Time magazine 2015 Person of the Year.

Perhaps you don't speak German or know much about Germany or even how to properly pronounce her name, though it's really not that hard (it's a hard "g"). You perhaps do know that she is considered a modern-day international-diplomacy and left-wing-enough Wonder Woman. Hence, the perfect gift is Jill Lepore's The Secret History of Wonder Woman. There are always lessons for politicians to be found in history, and this book charts Wonder Woman's connection to first-wave feminism and details of her creator's love of S&M. Like I said, much to learn.

Of course your shopping list won't be dealt with purely by a trip to your local, independent bookstore that's been around so long it's practically heritage designated.

So, for the ISIL fighter on your list, you'll need to head online and research the right fine French perfume, or perhaps a Twix chocolate bar. Let me explain: in a recent interview on National Public Radio, a man who'd escaped from an ISIL-controlled town detailed the fascination ISIL fighters have with Western goods, even luxury cars. So if you can afford it, splurge on a Ferrari.

And there you have it: Christmas made easy! Happy shopping and ho ho ho!

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Your essential daily news

Nailed it! Kerry Washington is OPI's new creative ambassador

Your Star Wars primer

Frozen in carbonite for the last 38 years? Recently returned from exile on Dagobah? You can still turn your watercooler into the Mos Eisley Cantina with this Star Wars 101 crash course, just in time for The Force Awakens on Dec. 18. **COLIN MCNEIL/METRO**

In four days, the Force will awaken for the first time in a decade.

A new Star Wars movie is coming out, and in case you haven't heard, advance ticket sales have shattered records. Star Wars-branded merchandise has already done $1 billion in sales — and no one's even seen the movie yet.

But after 38 years, six feature-length films and more novels, comics and TV shows than you can shake a lightsaber at, why is the world going crazy for another Star Wars movie?

Well, for one thing, George Lucas had nothing to do with it, having sold the franchise to Disney for a cool $4 billion in 2012. And believe it or not, that's a relief to many diehard fans.

They had their hearts broken when Lucas decided to alter his original masterpieces in the 1990s by inserting gratuitous computer animation and changing essential details in character-defining scenes (read: Greedo shooting first).

Then there's the nostalgia factor. The last time anyone got this excited for a new Star Wars movie, we got Jar Jar Binks and a sour taste in our mouths for the price of admission. But those were the prequels — weird, lame prequels that took some of our favourite characters and ideas, and blew them up like the Death Star blew up Alderaan.

To that end, Disney has very

consciously tried to entwine this new film with the classics we all know and love. The trailers are light on new characters, heavy on X-Wings, Han and Chewie, and goosebump-inducing shots of the Millennium Falcon.

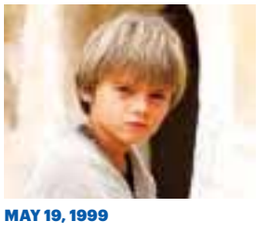
So for every fan who's been holding on to their VHS copies of the original trilogy, for every kid that came out of the theatre in 1999 confused and disappointed, The Force Awakens has been a long time coming.

Follow Colin McNeil on Twitter @McNeilColin

STAR WARS A TIMELINE OF THE UNIVERSE

Grab the popcorn and tell your protocol droid to hold your calls. We've got the ultimate, chronologically ordered Star Wars watchlist.

• ALL FIGURES REPRESENT TOTAL LIFETIME DOMESTIC GROSS



MAY 19, 1999

Ep. I: The Phantom Menace

Jedi Knights Obi-Wan Kenobi and Qui-Gon Jinn battle an evil Sith Lord called Darth Maul. Meanwhile, a young slave named Anakin Skywalker discovers his latent abilities in the Force.

GROSS $474,544,677

MAY 16, 2002

Ep. II: Attack of the Clones

Ten years later, Obi-Wan begins to unravel dark threads hinting at machinations behind a separatist war within the Galactic Republic, while Anakin falls in love with the former Queen of the planet he helped save as a boy.

GROSS $310,675,583

2003, 2008

Clone Wars

Two separate cartoon shows, Star Wars: Clone Wars (2003) and Star Wars: The Clone Wars (2008) bridge the three-year gap between Episodes II and III.

GROSS N/A

MAY 19, 2005

Ep. III: Revenge of the Sith

After a Sith Lord called Darth Sidious seizes the Republic in a political coup, he orders all Jedi exterminated. Embracing the dark side of the Force, Anakin joins him and becomes Darth Vader.

GROSS $380,262,555

2014, 1985

Rebels; Droids; and Ewoks

Three separate animated series, Rebels chronicles the genesis of the rebellion against the Galactic Empire, Ewoks follows a cast of the cuddly critters, and Droids the beloved characters C-3PO and R2-D2.

GROSS N/A

3 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

1 All in the family

The ties that bind the Star Wars universe — through its soon-to-be seven films, myriad novels and television shows — are familial ones. The story begins with a young Anakin Skywalker, who (spoiler alert!) grows into a Jedi Knight, falls to the Dark Side, and is defeated by his own children, Luke and Leia.

And it gets much deeper: Luke's mentors are the same as his father's, his droid companion C-3PO was built by his father. Darth Sidious (a.k.a Emperor Palpatine) hails from the same planet as Luke's mother.

With The Force Awakens set 30 years after Return of the Jedi, and a slew of new characters, it's a safe bet the Skywalker and Solo family trees will grow more branches.

Just who are they and how are they related to the Skywalker legacy? Not even Jedi clairvoyance could reveal that.

2 The Force?

Obi-Wan Kenobi called the Force an "energy field created by all living things. It surrounds us and penetrates us. It binds the galaxy together." That's the philosophical view.

The prequel trilogy, much to the displeasure of many Star Wars fans, boiled the Force down to quantifiable, microscopic particles called midi-chlorians. The higher a being's midi-chlorian count, the more potentially powerful they could be in the ways of the Force.

There are two very broad categories of Force users — light side and dark side. The light side of the Force is all about peace, love and knowledge. Namaste.

The dark side are the naughty ones — they use raw emotions like anger, fear and even love as their power base.

3 Empire vs. Rebellion

The bad guys in the original Star Wars trilogy, and likely in The Force Awakens, are the Galactic Empire — a totalitarian regime ruled by a Sith lord. The Empire is a xenophobic, militant organization that enforces its rule of law with blaster rifles and storm troopers. In past films, they have committed mass genocide on a planetary scale.

The rebellion is a group of volunteer freedom fighters who stand against the Empire, trying to restore the Republic of old. Always outnumbered and outgunned, they fought a desperate battle against the Empire, finally toppling it thanks in large part to a young man named Luke Skywalker. From what we know from the Episode VII trailers, The Empire, or a splinter of it, has survived decades after the fall of the second Death Star.

MAY 25, 1977

Ep. IV: A New Hope

Luke Skywalker, son of Anakin, joins a rebellion against what is now the Galactic Empire — a totalitarian regime ruled by Darth Vader and his master, Sidious. Luke befriends smuggler Han Solo and rebellion leader Princess Leia.

GROSS $460,998,007

JUNE 20, 1980

Ep. V: The Empire Strikes Back

Luke trains with the last of the Jedi masters — Yoda — in preparation for his battle with Darth Vader, while Han Solo and Leia are betrayed by an old friend. Vader reveals he is Luke's father.

GROSS $290,158,751

MAY 25, 1983

Ep. VI: Return of the Jedi

While Luke confronts his father and Emperor Palpatine personally, Han and Leia help rebel forces topple the Empire once and for all in a climactic space battle.

GROSS $309,125,409

1970S TO PRESENT

The lost storylines

For decades between the films, fans have sated their appetite for Star Wars with an entire galaxy of novels and comics. These books have now been officially de-canonized by Disney, leaving many beloved storylines in timeline purgatory.

GROSS N/A

DEC. 18, 2015

Ep. VII: The Force Awakens

The exact plot details of Episode VII are a closely guarded secret, but we do know Luke, Han and Leia feature in it, alongside new protagonists and a sinister looking Sith called Kylo Ren. It takes place 30 years after Episode VI.

PRE-SALE GROSS $50,000,000+

WHO'S WHO

Droids

A catchall term for robots, shorthand for androids. Anything made of metal that moves around, bleeps and bloops or speaks is a droid. Though sentient, they possess no inherent rights or freedoms as beings.

Stormtroopers

The mainstay of the Empire's foot soldiers, these iconically armoured warriors have been present in nearly every Star Wars film. And yes, they're human beings underneath the armour.

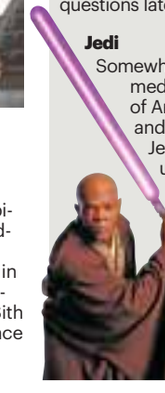
Sleek spaceships

Almost true characters themselves, Star Wars symbolism is rife with iconic spaceships like the rough and tough Millennium Falcon, the darkly sleek Tie fighters, and the rebels' go-to space fighter of choice, the X-Wing.

Sith

The evil antithesis to the Jedi, they harness the power of the Dark Side of the Force. There can be only two Sith in existence at one time — a master, and an apprentice. These guys wield red lightsabers and adopt a 'decapitate first, ask questions later' attitude.

Jedi

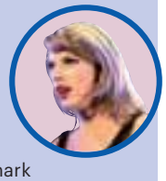


Somewhere between medieval knights of Arthurian legend and mystic druids, Jedi are Force users who tap into the light side, using their power only for defence and knowledge.

COLIN MCNEIL/ METRO

GOSSIP BRIEFS

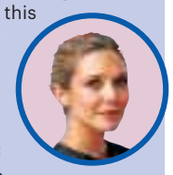
Has Taylor Swift gone mad with trademarking power?



Taylor Swift decided to close out her banner year by trying to trademark a whole slew of terms, including "Blank space," "Swiftmas" and "1989." Swift filed 20 trademark applications in all. I know her tour literally just ended and all, but should we be worried that Swift has too much free time on her hands?

NED EHRBAR/FOR METRO

Elizabeth Olsen dumped fiancé over the phone



Oh man, this is rough. Actor Boyd Holbrook, former fiancé of Elizabeth Olsen, apparently feels like enough time has gone by to vent his frustrations about the demise of their relationship — a breakup neither had officially confirmed before now.

"On the same day that my best friend died, I got a call from my girl to tell me it was over," Holbrook tells Man of the World magazine, referring to the split as a "divorce," even. The one-two punch of Olsen's breakup call and friend David Armstrong's death led Holbrook to become "consumed with my own personal depression," he says, though he did eventually cheer himself up over the past 10 months.

NED EHRBAR/FOR METRO

Fashion Santa is the new red

Paul Mason, also known as Fashion Santa, has gained international attention for his collaboration with Yorkdale Shopping Centre as the Toronto mall's Fashion Santa. Mason is taking selfies with shoppers to raise funds for The Hospital for Sick Children. CHRIS NICHOLLS/HANDOUT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

PAUL MASON

Long-time model takes selfies for SickKids

Paul Mason has devoted three decades to modelling, but the worldwide attention he's received for his stylish take on Santa Claus is a fashionable first.

Toronto's Yorkdale Shopping Centre enlisted Mason as its resident Fashion Santa and the face of the mall's holiday campaign.

During the festive season, he is also posing for selfies with shoppers in support of SickKids Foundation, which raises funds on behalf of Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children.

But beyond his own white beard and a penchant for red and white, Mason shares little else in common with the jolly old elf — and that's part of what's made him an overnight sensation.

The 6-foot-1 model has made a splash posing in sleek designer wear and striking poses in and around the mall showcasing his modern twist on St. Nick.

The images have gone viral, garnering attention from magazines like Time, Fortune and Harper's Bazaar, and press from across the pond from the Telegraph newspaper and BBC.

"It's just the most unexpected thing," said Mason, 51.

"Of course, I've had a long career — 30 years as a model prior to social media — and this is something else. I've never seen anything like it.

"Through working all over the world, I have friends in all the major cities, and collectively they've come together and just supported what's going on. But they're equally as shocked as anyone else."

Mason collaborated with Yorkdale last year, but the shopping centre embarked on a larger promotional push with this year's campaign, said marketing director Lucia Connor.

Connor said she believes part of the intense interest stems from the ability of adults to reconnect with a part of their childhood.

"When we speak to some of the customers that come through to see Santa, the adults get so excited and they say: 'The last time I took a photo with Santa I was young, I was little,"' she said.

"I think now what people are able to do is now proudly display their own photo of adult Fashion Santa, and instead of the mantel, they're displaying it on their social media feeds."

Mason is slated to take on Fashion Santa duty at the mall on Dec. 18, 19, 20 and 23.

For every selfie taken and posted on social media and accompanied by the hashtag "YorkdaleFashionSanta," Yorkdale will donate $1 to SickKids Foundation, up to $10,000.

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JOHANNA SCHNELLER **WHAT I'M WATCHING**

SOUNDING JOY
Bill Murray's "natural role is sending out quips from the sidelines. Miley is a star."

Miley Cyrus with George Clooney, left, and Bil Murray in A Very Murray Christmas. CONTRIBUTED

Miley puts the merry in Murray Christmas

THE SHOW **A VERY MURRAY CHRISTMAS (NETFLIX)**

THE MOMENT **THE MILEY MIRACLE**

For 40 minutes, we've watched people be sad. Bill Murray has the Christmas blues. A snowstorm has kept his guests from showing up at Manhattan's Carlysle Hotel to tape his holiday special. He trades barbs with his agents (Amy Poehler and Julie White). He talks to a distressed bride and groom (Rashida Jones and Jason Schwartzman).

Finally, something magical happens: Murray passes out, and into his dream, on a sleigh, rides… Miley Cyrus. She wears a fur-trimmed red mini with matching pumps. She sits on a white grand piano and belts out Silent Night. She saves Christmas — and Murray's ass.

I'm not saying there isn't a place for sadness during the holidays. There is. But this is ironic sadness, and Christmas and irony do not go well together. You end up feeling nothing.

Murray, director Sophia Coppola, and writer Mitch Glazer clearly are enamoured with the random nature of holiday specials — how celebs just show up and sing. Unfortunately, they don't seem to realize that the randomness had a point: the singing (example: Bing Crosby and David Bowie's famous duet of The Little Drummer Boy). This has entirely too much croaking. It's an un-special.

Also, it may be heretic for me to say this, but I'm growing weary of Murray. He was smart to dole himself out sparingly all these years. When you see too much of him, you realize how thin his schtick is. His natural role is sending out quips from the sidelines. Miley is a star.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

ANIMATED HOLIDAY SPECIAL

A Nutcracker story with a lot of puck

Hockey meets ballet in The Curse of Clara. SMILEY GUY STUDIOS

Only in Canada would an animated The Nutcracker special be given a hockey twist.

The Curse of Clara: a Holiday Tale is based on Vickie Fagan's autobiographical short story recalling her days dancing in The Nutcracker for the National Ballet of Canada. The year is 1972 and a young ballerina reaches into the hockey world for inspiration — specifically, a legendary Canada-U.S.S.R showdown.

One of the stars of that unforgettable series was former Boston Bruins scoring ace Phil Esposito. The centreman led the NHL professionals to a come-from-behind win against the perennial Olympic hockey champs from what was then known as the Soviet Union.

WILE E. ESPOSITO
Asked what cartoon character he most relates to, Esposito laughed and said, "Wile E. Coyote — except he got beat up all the time!"

In the special, Esposito's heroics — and charisma — inspire a young ballerina to dance to her goal.

Esposito lends his voice to the special along with veteran Hockey Night in Canada play-by-play announcer Bob Cole — who called the actual Summit Series on radio that September of 1972 — former prima ballerina Karen Kain, Sheila McCarthy, Sara Botsford and Saara Chaudry.

The special premieres Dec. 14 on CBC. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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BANKSY GRAFFITI ARTIST ADDRESSES REFUGEE CRISIS Street artist Banksy has taken on the migrant crisis in a new mural at a migrant camp in France. The elusive artist has depicted the late Apple guru Steve Jobs — whose biological father was from Syria — carrying a black garbage bag and an early model of the Macintosh computer. The artist best known for his subversive street art has never disclosed his identity. His publicist, Jo Brooks, confirmed Saturday that the work found at the encampment in Calais is genuine. Jobs was adopted. His biographer, Walter Isaacson, has described the computer genius's biological father, Abdulfattah Jandali, as a graduate student who came from a prominent family and studied in the U.S. Banksy has travelled the world to comment on war, child poverty and the environment. MICHEL SPINGLER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Russian creatives try to polish Putin's bad rep

PATRIOTISM

Movies and jewelry line cast Putin as country's hero

Clothing designers discuss their latest outfits at the headquarters of a pro-Kremlin youth centre called Set in Moscow. IVAN SEKRETAREV/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It may not be Spider-Man, but a group of young Russians is creating a new generation of superheroes in an effort to stir up patriotic fervour, and give President Vladimir Putin a boost.

The designers, writers, artists and animators working in an organization called Set, which translates as "network" or "net," build their story lines in a space that could be confused with a hip Silicon Valley startup. But this group prefers to think of itself as anything but Western.

Set is creating a series of new superhero films featuring everyday Russians who face challenges and prove themselves to be patriots.

"We don't need to look for good deeds far away if we can find them here," said Daniil Zotov, the creative director. He said real-life heroes are far preferable to fantasy figures such as Superman and Spider-Man.

Most of the people who work on Set's film and design projects are unpaid volunteers, the group said, motivated by patriotism rather than profit.

The initiative is a contemporary take on an old Russian theme of love of the motherland, with Putin as its ultimate hero.

One team of designers has crafted a new clothing and jewelry line entitled "Putinversteher," German for "Putin sympathizer." A ring with a miniature Putin face set on a silver band is one of the group's bestselling items.

"If before I asked a foreigner what they associate with Russia, he would have said 'matryoshka,' 'balalaika,' and 'bears,'" said designer Gleb Krainik, referring to the famous Russian nesting dolls and a traditional string instrument.

"Now, any foreigners, whether they like Putin or not, would say Putin."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Know the cost of home ownership

Owning a home comes with unexpected costs. Make sure you budget two to four per cent of your home's value for yearly maintenance costs. ISTOCK

PLANNING

Your budget needs to cover more than just the mortgage

Gail Vaz-Oxlade
For Metro Canada

Owning a home is an expensive proposition.

People think all you have to do is figure out whether you can afford the mortgage payments and taxes. They're wrong.

Owning a home requires planning and a big commitment in terms of time and money. Lots of people who think that they're ready have seriously miscalculated. And then their dream home turns into a money pit.

Another mistake new homeowners make is not changing anything about the way they spend their money once they move into a place of their own. Sure, their housing costs have gone up, but so what? If you're used to buying whatever you want, whenever you want, and you keep up that bad habit, in no time at all, you'll be floundering.

Time to swap some bad habits for some good ones.

It's sometimes pretty hard to see what you're doing wrong, so it's good to know that your partner will be willing and able to spot your flaws and point them out to you. Ha!

And, of course, the best way to see the error of one's ways is to put a dollar value on the stuff you've been buying.

Whether it's junk food or expensive shampoo, once you add up what that indulgence is costing over the long term, you'll want to stop.

Sometimes even the most obvious misstep can't be avoided simply because people hate giving up on an idea once they've committed to it. That's where doing the math becomes the bright light that makes it clear if you'll make it or not as new homeowners.

Time to make a new budget incorporating all the costs associated with owning a home, and adjusting the amount you'll spend elsewhere to compensate for higher shelter costs.

Add up the mortgage payment, property taxes, condo fees, utilities and insurance. Don't forget to budget between about two per cent (in cities) to four per cent (in the country) of the value of your home for home maintenance every year to keep a house in reasonable shape.

If you have an older home that needs work, you should use the higher number.

Subtract the amount you're currently spending to keep a roof over your head.

The difference — the increase in your shelter costs — has to come from somewhere, so what are you not going to spend money on to have that home of your dreams? Will you give up daily coffee, lunch out, that winter vacation you so look forward to?

Something's gotta give, and here's where you decide what that something (or those somethings) will be.

When you work out how much you'll need in your budget you'll probably choke.

Once you get over your sputtering, know that since your home is likely to be your biggest financial asset, you better take good care of it. From lawn care to repainting every few years, from a new furnace to replacing the roof, home ownership is an expensive business.

If you aren't up for the responsibility, renting is always an option.

For more money advice, visit Gail's website at gailvazoxlade.com

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Christmas is in the mail

Oh Clark Griswold. Unlike the hero of National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation, there is no need to settle for the Jelly of the Month club. Instead this season, try some of these decidedly more appealing box-of-the-month deals.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

BarkBox

Cost: $29 per month for one month, up to $228 for 12 months, with $5 extra shipping charge to send boxes to Canada.

What's inside: Surprise Fido monthly with this box of pup-approved treats, chews, and toys to get their tails wagging. Pick a box based on your dog's size.

How it started: Founders Carly Strife, Matt Meeker and Henrik Werdelin had a hard time finding products they liked at their local pet stores for their pups. "So they decided to put together a box that would surprise and delight and give the dogs a piece of mail every month," says Alexis Anderson, BarkBox's head of partnerships.

Website: barkbox.com

Spicy subscriptions

Cost: Boxes range from $14.95 for a single product/monthly to $250 for a year. Shipping to Canada is an extra $6.50.

What's inside: From lubes, lotions and oils to toys and accessories, this sexy subscription is sure to surprise. Oh and yes, the company ships discreetly.

How it got started: Adi and his girlfriend had started dating and wanted to explore some intimate items — only it was a bit intimidating for his partner. That's when he realized it probably wasn't just her who felt like that.

Website: spicysubscriptions.com

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Office grocery

Cost: From $45 to $130.

What's inside: Weekly, biweekly or monthly boxes have subscribers choosing fruit, bulk snacks, trail mixes and mixed bars.

How it got started: Rory Stavro-Pearce already knew the business — after all, he'd been running a healthy vending machine company, Organic Vending for almost seven years.

Website: officegrocery.com

Panty by post

Cost: From $45 to $380 depending on the line of briefs you choose.

What's inside: Underwear by mail? You bet — choose from the basic, signature (the site's most popular panties) or premium lines to surprise the man or woman in your life monthly with a new set of undies.

How it got started: An appreciator of all things French, Vancouver-based Natalie Grunberg wanted to share that "Frenchness" with others. "I wanted to deliver something that was little because of shipping rates, that was something everything needs and that was French," she says. She spends part of her summers in the Riviera.

Website: pantybypost.com

The Cincinnati Bengals were hit hard Sunday; they were beaten 33-20 by Pittsburgh and lost quarterback Andy Dalton to a broken thumb

Canada makes cuts as Virtanen returns

WORLD JUNIOR HOCKEY

Four trimmed from roster as Canuck rookie welcomed back

Canada's Jake Virtanen at the 2015 IIHF World Junior Championships. DENIS PAJOT/GETTY IMAGES

Canada's junior team made four cuts on Sunday — and one important addition.

The Vancouver Canucks gave forward Jake Virtanen permission to join Canada's national junior team, a little over an hour after Hockey Canada completed its first round of cuts to its selection camp roster. Forwards Pierre-Luc Dubois, Michael Dal Colle and Spencer Watson were cut from the team along with defenceman Jakob Chychrun.

Virtanen is one of four players returning from last year's gold medal-winning team, joining forwards Brayden Point and Lawson Crouse as well as defenceman Joe Hicketts. He's the only member of Canada's junior team with regular-season experience in the NHL.

"He brings a power-forward element," said Hicketts in the lobby of the team's hotel in suburban Toronto. "Anytime you can get a player of that calibre back it helps the lineup."

Virtanen was in downtown Toronto playing with the American Hockey League's Utica Comets, who he'd been assigned to on a conditioning stint, and will join Canada immediately. The team will leave for Imatra, Finland, late Monday for practices and exhibition games before the world championship tournament begins in Helsinki on Dec. 26.

The 19-year-old right-winger from New Westminster, B.C., and fellow rookie Jared McCann both made the Canucks roster on Nov. 1, passing their nine-game tryout period. He has a goal and three assists in 19 games with Vancouver and has no points in two games with Utica.

The cuts came after the second of two exhibition games between Canada and a team of all-stars from Canadian universities. Canada's junior team now has 15 forwards, nine defencemen and three goaltenders with more cuts to come when the team is in Europe. Samuel Montembeault made 33 saves as Canada shut out the Canadian Interuniversity Sport team 5-0 on Sunday afternoon to conclude Canada's junior selection camp.

Montembeault was added to Canada's roster on Tuesday after Mackenzie Blackwood was suspended by the Ontario Hockey League for eight games. The International Ice Hockey Federation honours CHL suspensions, forcing Blackwood to miss the first two games of the international tournament.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

AHL

Admirals sink Moose with shootout win

SUNDAY at MTS Centre

4	3
ADMIRALS	MOOSE

A fervent five minutes of 3-on-3 overtime solved nothing Sunday afternoon before Milwaukee Admirals forward Vinny Saponari notched the winner in the fifth round of the shootout to beat the Manitoba Moose 4-3 in front of a sold-out 8,812 at MTS Centre.

Following Jay Harrison's equalizer for the Moose with 2:26 to play, Josh Morrissey nearly ended it in the game's final seconds.

In what would have been Morrissey's second goal of the game — and the season — the Winnipeg Jets first-round draft pick beat Admirals goaltender Juuse Saros with a low wrister, but couldn't beat the post.

After a trio of 3-2 Moose victories over Milwaukee (16-8-1-0) this season — the most recent coming Saturday night at home, equalling half of their six total wins this season — Manitoba (6-14-1-2) dropped their first of four meetings with their Central Division rivals.

Manitoba's Ryan Olsen and Jay Harrison also tallied markers, while netminder Eric Comrie had a busy afternoon stopping 34 of the 37 shots he faced in 65 minutes of play.

The Moose conclude a four-game home stand with a pair against the San Antonio Rampage on Wednesday and Thursday night before returning to MTS Centre on New Year's Eve to host the Iowa Wild.

DARRIN BAUMING/FOR METRO

IN BRIEF

Zidlicky double helps Islanders cruise past Devils

Marek Zidlicky scored twice and Thomas Greiss made 27 saves for his first shutout of the season to lead the Islanders to a 4-0 victory over the New Jersey Devils on Sunday, extending New York's streak without a regulation loss to 10 games.

John Tavares and Matt Martin also scored for the Islanders, are on an 8-0-2 stretch and moved into second place in the Metropolitan Division, one point ahead rivals Rangers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Homan outsweeps Jones to win Canadian Open

Ottawa's Rachel Homan scored a pair in the final end for an 8-7 victory over Winnipeg's Jennifer Jones in Sunday's final at the Canadian Open.

It was the third straight Grand Slam victory for Homan, who won the Masters and the National earlier this season.

Toronto's John Epping defeated Brad Gushue of St. John's 7-4 in the men's final.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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NFL

Panthers hit new level of dominance to improve to 13-0

SUNDAY In Charlotte

38	0
PANTHERS	FALCONS

Cam Newton raced from one end of the Carolina Panthers' sideline to the other in the final moments of a 38-0 rout of the Atlanta Falcons on Sunday, raising his arms to the crowd as fans cheered on their emotional MVP candidate.

"I believe right now it's our moment as Panthers," Newton said with a smile. "We try to seize it as much as possible."

Newton — and the fans — had plenty of reason to celebrate.

The fifth-year quarterback completed 15 of 21 passes for 265 yards and three touchdowns, and the unbeaten Panthers clinched a first-round bye in the NFC playoffs in what Newton described as the team's most complete game.

It's hard to argue that.

The Panthers out-gained the Falcons 424-230, forced four turnovers and matched the franchise's largest margin of victory.

It was never close.

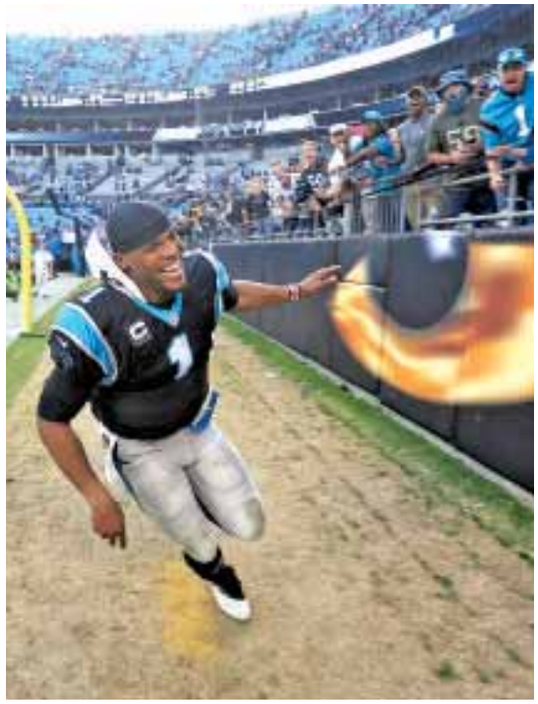
Jonathan Stewart ran for a one-yard TD and Newton connected on scoring strikes of 74 and 46 yards to Ted Ginn Jr. as the Panthers (13-0) scored on their first three possessions to take a 21-0 first quarter lead.

Newton also threw a four-yard TD pass to Ed Dickson in the final seconds of the first half before leaving for good at the end of the third quarter with Carolina up 38. He finished with a career-high QB rating of 153.3.

"Don't ease up on the gas," Newton said. "We want to be considered finishers."

Carolina's defence had two interceptions, two fumble recoveries and registered five sacks — two by defensive tackle Kawann Short — while limiting struggling Falcons quarterback Matt Ryan to 224 yards passing.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Cam Newton has already thrown a career-high 28 TD passes — with three games left to play. BOB LEVERONE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MMA

McGregor all set for superstardom

Gab is just one of Conor McGregor's many gifts.

The Irish star possesses a punching power that has made him an undisputed world champion in just seven UFC fights. McGregor also has an uncanny ability to predict not only the outcome of a fight, but the manner in which he'll accomplish his next feat of pugilistic prowess.

McGregor called his shot well before his featherweight title bout with Jose Aldo at UFC 194, vowing he wouldn't need a full round to stop a champion who hadn't lost in 10 years. And then he delivered that shot to Aldo's jaw to end the fight in just 13 seconds — a little quicker than even he expected.

"Mystic Mac strikes again," McGregor said.

For as much as McGregor talks, he was sure to get some predictions right. Yet when asked to foresee his own future after he ended Aldo's 18-fight winning streak, McGregor wasn't quite ready.

"I'll give it some time," McGregor said Saturday night.

Indeed, McGregor reigns atop the featherweight division and the sport after a remarkable 2015. He won three fights, made untold millions and raised his fame near the heights reached by Ronda Rousey, who will be featured alongside him on the cover of EA Sports' new UFC video game.

"I think I am the pound-for-pound No. 1," McGregor said.

And he predicts next year will be even bigger. The Dublin native's next fight will be a title bout at either featherweight or lightweight.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Conor McGregor GETTY IMAGES

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RECIPE Spicy Beef Tacos

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

These easy tacos get a zing of heat from chili but a warmth from cumin and cinnamon.

Ready in
Prep time: 30 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 1 large sweet potato, diced into bite-size pieces
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 1/2 tsp salt, divided
- 1 lb organic lean ground beef
- 1 Tbsp chili powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp dried oregano
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- 1/4 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup shaved Monterey Jack cheese
- A handful of chopped fresh cilantro
- Salsa
- 8 corn tortillas, warmed according to package directions

Directions
1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. In a bowl, toss sweet potato with olive oil and 1/2 tsp salt. Spread sweet potato pieces out in a single layer on a lined baking sheet. Bake in the oven for 5 to 7 minutes. Toss and then bake another 3 to 5 minutes, or until fork tender. Remove potatoes from oven and place in a bowl.
3. In a large skillet, cook beef over medium heat until browned, about 10 minutes.
4. In a small bowl, blend chili powder, cumin, cinnamon and dried oregano. Stir into the meat the garlic, spice blend, pepper and remaining salt; cook for another 2 minutes. Remove beef from heat and transfer to serving dish.
5. Place beef, sweet potato, slices of red onion, cheese, fresh cilantro, salsa and tortillas out on the table for taco assembly. Enjoy.

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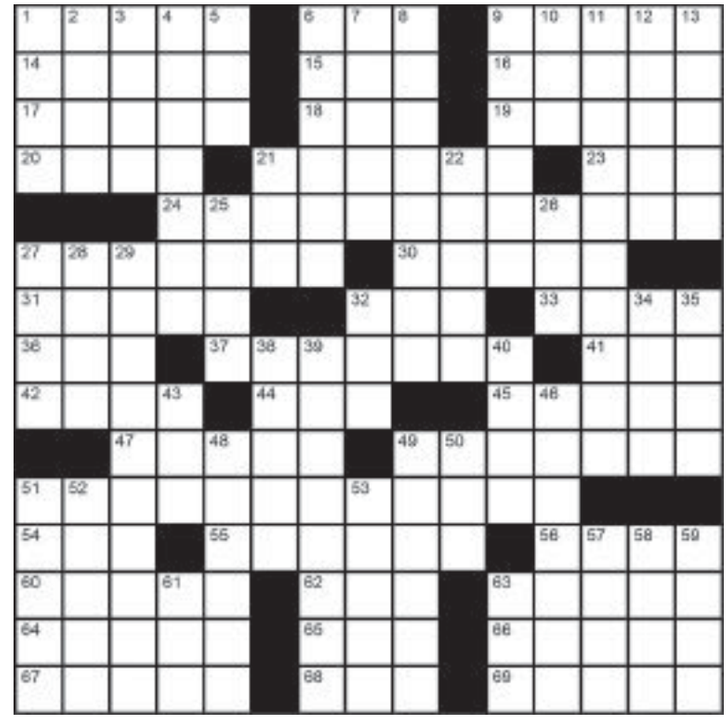
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Possessed, in ye olden days
6. Winter roads worry
9. Country legend Johnny's
14. Join
15. Ho! Ho! Ho! X-__ (Dec. 25th)
16. Tear that paper: 2 wds.
17. Concluded
18. Kitty's rival
19. Irish rebel Rory
20. Momentarily
21. __ mustache (Sported by Sherlock Holmes creator Sir Arthur Conan Doyle)
23. "Whistle __ the Lave O't": Song by Scottish poet Robert Burns
24. Holiday candies by #49-Down celebrating their 130th anniversary: 2 wds.
27. Noncompliant
30. Flair
31. Lagoon-in-the-middle island
32. "__ _ recall..."
33. Stroller, to a Brit
36. Neither's partner
37. Appetizer served with plum sauce: 2 wds.
41. Pasta names suffix
42. 'Within'-meaning prefix
44. Swiss peak
45. Mr. Williams of "Happy Days"
47. Animal of The Andes
49. Doorkeeper
51. What people do when they sign into their e-mail accounts: 2 wds.
54. Bit of food
55. Of bears
56. 'Demo' suffix (Politician sort)
60. Get _ __ (Score in hockey)
62. "How was _ _ know?"
63. The Congo's former name
64. "Irma la __" (1963)
65. Grandma
66. Stick on
67. Fashion show walk
68. Unit of work
69. Bug: 2 wds.

DOWN
1. Shades
2. __ Domini (AD)
3. "Thank You" singer
4. Sheet that when painted over reveals a design beneath
5. Bill's bogus buddy
6. Influential effect
7. Shower sealant
8. Starbucks serving
9. Surname of one of Neil Young's bandmates
10. Purpose
11. Cutlery user's slip of the tongue?
12. Just-got-the-job person
13. 'Trick' suffixes
21. Get the glory
22. Up to a certain time
25. Fit, fiddle-style
26. "Superman's Dead" rock gr. from Toronto
27. Stand-up comedian Mr. Cook
28. Collar type
29. Archaeology in New Brunswick... Historic trading post in Saint John: 2 wds.
32. Dadaist Jean
34. Kind of buffalo
35. Duluth's state, for short
38. Nintendo enthusiast
39. Translucent envelope material for storing stamps
40. Tardy
43. Previous
46. Instant coffee brand
48. Protector-from-harm charm
49. Family-owned New Brunswick chocolatier since 1873
50. Bronze __
51. Map's lines, often
52. Grain fungus
53. Ravi Shankar's instrument
57. Fissure
58. Opera offering
59. Communicate, techie-style
61. Prefix with 'puncture'
63. 'Zig' add-on

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
Watch your back and think twice before giving anyone the benefit of the doubt. The Sun may be moving through your fellow Fire sign of Sagittarius but so is Saturn, planet of limitation, and that means someone may be working against you.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
You may not want to but it's time to give up on a goal that requires the kind of cash you no longer have. Let it go and next time aim for something cheaper.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You will get conflicting advice but you know what must be done, so do it. Trust your instincts and hope for the best. The best will happen.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You may be tempted to call the bluff of those you are negotiating with and hold out for a better offer but the planets warn that is not a good idea. You would be wise to seal the deal on the terms being offered.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Your confidence could slump as Saturn makes it easy to see nothing but grey skies. Your problems may be all in the mind but if you believe bad things are going to happen then they most likely will.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Someone is refusing to see sense. You tried to point them in the right direction, so if they make a mess of things it's their own fault.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Some people may say that you're losing your edge, that you are not as decisive and dynamic as you used to be, but it isn't true. Even a Libra is entitled to relax once in a while.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Try not to appear too eager today. If you can give others, especially rivals, the impression that you don't care whether you win or lose you'll lull them into a false sense of security.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You can't change past failures, so there is no point in dwelling on them. However, while the Sun is in your sign you can have a few successes, so stop being negative and start doing things that get you noticed.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Something is bothering you and your rivals and enemies are beginning to pick up on your fear. Don't worry about whether you are moving in the right direction because all roads lead to the same destination.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
If you try to live up to other people's image of you then you are likely to exhaust yourself for no good reason. Your health should be your main concern.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
If someone in a position of authority asks you to do something of a questionable nature today you must turn them down flat. Principle comes before power.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

	9		1		6		5	
3			4		7			2
9	3						2	1
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4	5						8	6
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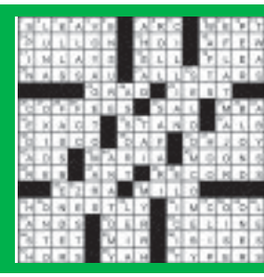

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7	2	1	3	5	4	9	6	8

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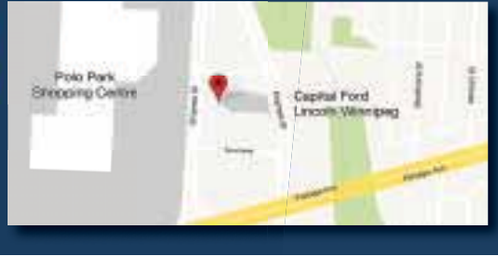

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